

This holiday season...prevent waste and recycle more

Between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, Americans generate 25 percent more waste that ends up in the landfill. Try a few of the tips below to make your holiday season greener!

Reduce holiday food waste

- Buy a little less food this holiday season, especially appetizers and sweets. Your guests will thank you, and you'll have fewer leftovers.
- Freeze leftover food or give to guests in reusable containers. This way, leftovers are more likely to be eaten than by putting it all in the host's refrigerator.
- Once you and your guests are stuffed, pluck the bird and throw the carcass into your yard debris cart along with other food scraps and food-soiled paper (if you have yard debris service). Mix in with leaves and other yard debris.
- Cut back on huge amounts of cooking oil by roasting the turkey in the oven instead of deep frying. If you must deep fry, take the leftover, cooled oil to a local biodiesel manufacturer – visit King County's website at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/wdidw/category.asp?CatID=9&MatID=50>.
- To avoid sewer backups, do not put oil down the kitchen drain or disposal. Do not put oil in the food debris cart. Small amounts of oil can be sopped up with used paper towels and put into the garbage.

Reduce paper and packaging waste

- When shopping, take your own bags.
- Choose to give experiences, home-made gifts, or purchase gifts with less packaging.
- Be creative with gift wrap. Use comics or newsprint, used gift paper and gift bags, scarves, or other reusable material.
- If you use traditional gift wrapping, buy those that can be recycled. Remember, foil and plastic wrap paper cannot be recycled.
- Make gift tags from last year's holiday cards.
- Use a decorative tin, flowerpot or basket to hold your present instead of wrapping it.

Reduce battery waste

- Buy rechargeable batteries. New on the market are rechargeable nickel metal hydride (NiMH) batteries that don't have to be charged before the first use and do not lose their charge quickly when not in use. You can find these new, improved batteries for sale at most stores.
- For options on recycling rechargeable and other types of batteries, visit http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Utilities/Battery_recycling.pdf

For details of what can be recycled in Bellevue, visit <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/recycling-garbage-residents.htm>

